

**What is Claimed is:**

1. A composition comprising:  
a first oligomeric compound and a second oligomeric compound,  
wherein at least a portion of said first oligomeric compound is capable of hybridizing with at least a portion of said second oligomeric compound,  
wherein at least a portion of said first oligomeric compound is capable of hybridizing to a target nucleic acid, and  
wherein said first oligomeric compound is cross-linked with said second oligomeric compound by one or more cross-linkages.
2. The oligonucleotide composition of claim 1 wherein said first and said second oligomeric compounds form a complementary pair of siRNA oligonucleotides.
3. The composition of claim 1 wherein said first and said second oligonucleotides comprise an antisense/sense pair of oligonucleotides.
4. The composition of claim 1 wherein each of said first and second oligomeric compounds comprises 10 to 40 nucleotides.
5. The composition of claim 1 wherein each of said first and second oligomeric compounds comprises 18 to 30 nucleotides.
6. The composition of claim 1 wherein each of said first and second oligomeric compounds comprises 21 to 24 nucleotides.
7. The composition of claim 1 wherein said first oligomeric compound comprises an antisense oligonucleotide.
8. The composition of claim 7 wherein said second oligomeric compound comprises a sense oligonucleotide.

9. The composition of claim 7 wherein said second oligomeric compound comprises an oligonucleotide having a plurality of ribose nucleotide units.
10. The composition of claim 1 wherein said composition comprises two or more cross-linkages.
11. The composition of claim 1 wherein at least one of said one or more cross-linkages occurs between terminal residues.
12. The composition of claim 1 wherein the 5' terminus of said second oligomeric compound is cross-linked with the 3' terminus of said first oligomeric compound.
13. The composition of claim 1 wherein at least one of said one or more cross-linkages occurs between internal oligomeric residues.
14. The composition of claim 1 comprising a first cross-linkage that connects a terminus of one of said first or second oligomeric compounds to a terminus of the other of said first or second oligomeric compounds and a second cross-linkage connecting an internal oligomeric residue of said first oligomeric compound with an oligomeric residue of said second oligomeric residue.
15. The composition of claim 1 wherein at least one of said one or more cross-linkages comprises a space-spanning group.
16. The composition of claim 15 wherein said space-spanning group comprises a polymer.
17. The composition of claim 16 wherein said polymer comprises polyethylene glycol.

18. The composition of claim 1 wherein at least one of said one or more cross-linkages occurs between heterocyclic base moieties.
19. The composition of claim 1 wherein at least one of said one or more cross-linkages is formed by photoactive coupling.
20. The composition of claim 19 wherein said at least one cross-linkage comprises a psoralen.
21. The composition of claim 1 wherein at least one of said one or more cross-linkages comprises a disulfide, amide, amine, oxime, oxyamine, oxyimine, morpholino, thioether, urea, thiourea, or sulfonamide moiety.
22. The composition of claim 1 having improved nuclease resistance compared with the same composition having no cross-linkages.
23. A composition comprising,  
a first oligomeric compound capable of hybridizing to a target nucleic acid,  
a second oligomeric compound hybridizable to said first oligomeric compound;  
at least one protein, said protein comprising at least a portion of an RNA-induced silencing complex (RISC),  
wherein said first and second oligomeric compounds are cross-linked by one or more cross-linkages.
24. The composition of claim 23 wherein said first oligomeric compound comprises an antisense oligonucleotide.
25. The composition of claim 23 wherein said first oligomeric compound comprises 10 to 40 nucleotides.
26. The composition of claim 23 wherein said first oligomeric compound comprises

18 to 30 nucleotides.

27. The composition of claim 23 wherein said first oligomeric compound comprises 21 to 24 nucleotides.

28. The composition of claim 23 wherein said second oligomeric compound comprises a sense oligonucleotide.

29. The composition of claim 23 wherein said second oligomeric compound comprises an oligonucleotide having a plurality of ribose nucleotide units.

30. The composition of claim 23 wherein said composition comprises two or more cross-linkages.

31. The composition of claim 23 wherein at least one of said one or more cross-linkages occurs between terminal oligomeric residues.

32. The composition of claim 23 wherein the 5' terminus of said second oligomeric compound is cross-linked with the 3' terminus of said first oligomeric compound.

33. The composition of claim 23 wherein at least one of said one or more cross-linkages occurs between internal oligomeric residues.

34. The composition of claim 23 comprising a first cross-linkage that connects a terminus of one of said first or second oligomeric compounds to a terminus of the other of said first or second oligomeric compounds and a second cross-linkage connecting an internal oligomeric residue of said first oligomeric compound with an oligomeric residue of said second oligomeric residue.

35. The composition of claim 23 wherein at least one of said one or more cross-linkages comprises a space-spanning group.

36. The composition of claim 35 wherein said space-spanning group comprises a polymer.
37. The composition of claim 36 wherein said polymer comprises polyethylene glycol
38. The composition of claim 23 wherein at least one of said one or more cross-linkages occurs between heterocyclic base moieties.
39. The composition of claim 23 wherein at least one of said one or more cross-linkages is formed by photoactive coupling.
40. The composition of claim 39 wherein said at least one cross-linkage comprises a psoralen.
41. The composition of claim 23 wherein at least one of said one or more cross-linkages comprises a disulfide, amide, amine, oxime, oxyamine, oxyimine, morpholino, thioether, urea, thiourea, or sulfonamide moiety.
42. The composition of claim 23 having improved nuclease resistance compared with the same composition having no cross-linkages.
43. An oligomeric compound comprising a first region and a second region,  
wherein said first region is capable of hybridizing with said second region,  
wherein a portion of said oligomeric compound is capable of hybridizing to a target nucleic acid, and  
wherein said oligomeric compound comprises one or more intrastrand cross-linkages.
44. The oligomeric compound of claim 43 wherein each of said first and said second regions comprises at least 10 nucleotides.

45. The oligomeric compound of claim 43 wherein said first region in a 5' to 3' direction is complementary to said second region in a 3' to 5' direction.
46. The oligomeric compound of claim 43 wherein said oligomeric compound comprises a hairpin structure.
47. The oligomeric compound of claim 43 further comprising a third region located between said first region and said second region.
48. The oligomeric compound of claim 43 wherein said third region comprises at least two oligomeric residues.
49. The oligomeric compound of claim 43 wherein said oligomeric compound is RNA.
50. The oligomeric compound of claim 43 wherein said oligomeric compound comprises two or more intrastrand cross-linkages.
51. The oligomeric compound of claim 43 wherein at least one of said one or more intrastrand cross-linkages occurs between internal oligomeric residues.
52. The oligomeric compound of claim 43 wherein at least one of said one or more intrastrand cross-linkages comprises a space-spanning group.
53. The oligomeric compound of claim 52 wherein said space-spanning group comprises a polymer.
54. The oligomeric compound of claim 53 wherein said polymer comprises polyethylene glycol.

55. The oligomeric compound of claim 43 wherein at least one of said one or more intrastrand cross-linkages occurs between heterocyclic base moieties.
56. The oligomeric compound of claim 43 wherein at least one of said one or more intrastrand cross-linkages is formed by photoactive coupling.
57. The oligomeric compound of claim 56 wherein said at least one intrastrand cross-linkage comprises a psoralen.
58. The composition of claim 43 wherein at least one of said one or more intrastrand cross-linkages comprises a disulfide, amide, amine, oxime, oxyamine, oximine, morpholino, thioether, urea, thiourea, or sulfonamide moiety.
59. The oligomeric compound of claim 43 having improved nuclease resistance compared with the same oligomeric compound having no cross-linkages.
60. A pharmaceutical composition comprising the composition of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.
61. A pharmaceutical composition comprising the composition of claim 23 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.
62. A pharmaceutical composition comprising the oligomeric compound of claim 43 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.
63. A method of modulating the expression of a target nucleic acid in a cell comprising contacting said cell with a composition of claim 1.
64. A method of modulating the expression of a target nucleic acid in a cell comprising contacting said cell with a composition of claim 23.

65. A method of modulating the expression of a target nucleic acid in a cell comprising contacting said cell with an oligomeric compound of claim 43.

66. A method of treating or preventing a disease or disorder associated with a target nucleic acid comprising administering to an animal having or predisposed to said disease or disorder a therapeutically effective amount of a composition of claim 1.

67. A method of treating or preventing a disease or disorder associated with a target nucleic acid comprising administering to an animal having or predisposed to said disease or disorder a therapeutically effective amount of a composition of claim 23.

68. A method of treating or preventing a disease or disorder associated with a target nucleic acid comprising administering to an animal having or predisposed to said disease or disorder a therapeutically effective amount of an oligomeric compound of claim 43.